

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An improved post for supporting and cushioning a product, the post comprising a base sheet convolutely wound into a hollow tube having two outer facing layers and a middle layer comprising one or more plies and interposed between the outer facing layers to form the post wall, the improvement comprising:  
at least one of the plies that forms the middle layer being thicker in at least some areas than the outer facing layers.
2. (Currently amended) The post of claim 1 wherein the middle layer is comprises embossed paper.
3. (Original) The post of claim 2 wherein the embossed paper is dimpled.
4. (Original) The post of 2 wherein the embossed paper is embossed on one side only.
5. (Original) The post of claim 2 wherein the base sheet is a single continuous sheet in which only that portion of the continuous sheet that forms the middle layer is embossed.
6. (Original) The post of claim 2 wherein the base sheet comprises non-embossed and embossed sheets joined edge to edge in the cross machine direction.
7. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post wall has a uniform wall thickness.
8. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post wall thickness varies.

9. (Original) The post of claim 8 wherein the post wall comprises straight portions and curved portions, and the curved portions are thicker than the straight portions.
10. (Currently amended) The post of claim 1 wherein at least part of the middle layer is low density paper.
11. (Original) The post of claim 10 wherein the low density paper comprises recycled fiber.
12. (Withdrawn) The post of claim 11 wherein the low density paper comprises a low density middle portion sandwiched between smooth liners.
13. (Withdrawn) The post of claim 1 wherein the base sheet is formed by laminating one or more second sheets onto a substrate in selected areas such that the base sheet has alternating thicknesses in the cross machine direction.
14. (Withdrawn) The post of claim 13 wherein the second sheet is low density paper.
15. (Withdrawn) The post of claim 13 wherein the second sheet is embossed paper.
16. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post has a substantially L-shaped cross-sectional profile.
17. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post has a substantially I-shaped cross-sectional profile.

18. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post has a substantially triangular cross-sectional profile.

19. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post has a substantially round cross-sectional profile.

20. (Original) The post of claim 1 wherein the post has a substantially angular cross-sectional profile.